

**Introduced by Senator Simitian**

March 22, 2012

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Senate Joint Resolution No. 22—Relative to World Press Freedom Day 2012.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SJR 22, as introduced, Simitian. World Press Freedom Day 2012.

This measure would recognize May 3, 2012, as World Press Freedom Day 2012, and encourage all state legislatures throughout the United States to recognize May 3, 2012, as World Press Freedom Day 2012, thereby also acknowledging the importance of a free press in the United States and the world.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, Section 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human
- 2 Rights, passed by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948,
- 3 proclaims that “[e]veryone has the right to freedom of opinion and
- 4 expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without
- 5 interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas
- 6 through any media and regardless frontiers”; and
- 7 WHEREAS, In 1993, the United Nations declared May 3rd of
- 8 each year as World Press Freedom Day; and
- 9 WHEREAS, May 3rd is now the annual date that celebrates the
- 10 fundamental principles of press freedom, evaluates press freedom
- 11 around the world, defends the media from attacks on its
- 12 independence, and pays tribute to journalists who have lost their
- 13 lives in the exercise of their profession; and
- 14 WHEREAS, According to the Committee to Protect Journalists,
- 15 an independent, nonprofit organization founded in 1981 to promote

1 press freedom worldwide, thus far, 13 journalists have been killed  
2 in 2012, a total of 907 journalists have been killed since 1992, and  
3 approximately 179 journalists are currently imprisoned worldwide;  
4 and

5 WHEREAS, According to Freedom House, a nonprofit  
6 organization with consultant status at the United Nations, press  
7 freedom is now in decline in almost every part of the world and  
8 only 15 percent of the world's citizens live in countries that enjoy  
9 a free press; and

10 WHEREAS, The growing influence of Internet reporting is  
11 being injured by censorship of Internet Web sites and imprisonment  
12 of online editors, bloggers, and web-based reporters in different  
13 countries throughout the world; and

14 WHEREAS, A free press within California and throughout the  
15 world plays a key role in sustaining and monitoring a healthy  
16 democracy, contributing to greater accountability in government,  
17 and promoting civic participation and economic development;  
18 now, therefore be it

19 *Resolved by the Senate and the Assembly of the State of*  
20 *California, jointly,* That the Legislature recognizes May 3, 2012,  
21 as World Press Freedom Day 2012, to commend all journalists  
22 around the world for their essential role in promoting accountability  
23 in government and strengthening civil society, to show respect for  
24 journalists who stay committed to their profession despite  
25 numerous personal threats to their safety, and to remember those  
26 journalists who have lost their lives in the exercise of their  
27 profession; and be it further

28 *Resolved,* The Legislature condemns any action against the  
29 exercise of a free press and reaffirms the importance of a free press  
30 in California and the United States; and be it further

31 *Resolved,* The Legislature encourages all state legislatures  
32 throughout the United States to recognize May 3, 2012, as World  
33 Press Freedom Day 2012, thereby also acknowledging the  
34 importance of a free press in the United States and the world; and  
35 be it further

36 *Resolved,* That the Secretary of the Senate transmit a copy of  
37 this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

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